

**The John Leland Center for Theological Studies**  
**MS310 Formation for Ministry**  
**Course Syllabus**  
**Fall 2023**

**INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

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Office hours: by appointment, in person or via Webex

**LOCATION & TIME**

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Arlington Campus and Online

1306 N. Highlight St.

Arlington, VA 22201

Tuesday evenings 6:00-8:50 pm ET

**COURSE RATIONALE AND DESCRIPTION**

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The *Formation for Ministry* course examines the calling and realities of vocational ministry in our current world as part of the Ministry Studies portion of the Diploma program.

The concept of “calling” is essential to the understanding of ministry. This course enables students to establish a framework for understanding and exploring their own calling, as well as providing them tools for assisting others in doing the same.

**COURSE OBJECTIVE & GOALS**

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The course serves to lay the groundwork for the rest of the Diploma program/curriculum, establishing the relevance of mastering the content of the other classes taught. Specific goals are:

1. For students to identify, evaluate and compose a foundation for personal spiritual growth and discernment of calling, both as disciples and as Christian leaders in pastoral ministry or other callings.
2. To assist students in developing a healthy framework for reflecting on their own journey of faith and interpreting life events in light of God’s sovereign purposes for spiritual formation and vocation.
3. To introduce students, through an integrated approach, to the historic disciplines and practices of the Christian faith that promote intimacy with God and Christ-like character.
4. To encourage students in acquiring the skills and leveraging their own personal gifts and abilities to facilitate spiritual awakening and renewal in others.

**COURSE COMPETENCIES**

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At the completion of the class, students will have demonstrated the following competencies:

1. Describe the vocation of Christian ministry, and how this unique call is discerned and exercised, as well as how it forms and shapes him or her.
2. Articulate a biblical, theological, historical, and philosophical perspective of formation and ministry.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the educational, spiritual, and ministry practices by which people mature in Christ.
4. Identify, articulate, and personally incorporate key Christian practices and disciplines of the spiritual life in a personal “rule of life.”
5. Identify their own gifts and calling, responding to areas of strength and challenge in preparation for serving the needs of the church and the world.
6. Explain the role of community (*personal, professional, ecclesial*) in discipleship and ministry development.
7. Demonstrate a basic awareness of contextual issues (*e.g., societal, ecclesial, familial, societal, historical, global*) and how they impact what it means to be a minister in a particular context.
8. Identify and interpret, using a biblically and theologically healthy approach, the diverse workings of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian, including how the Spirit’s power and presence are facilitated in the work of ministry.
9. Define what it means to be spiritually healthy, identifying areas of personal risk and potential methods and practices for self-care.
10. Articulate one’s own calling in terms of how it was discerned and has been affirmed, its direction for the future, and the ways in which he or she plans to prepare and engage in its fulfillment.

## **REQUIRED & RECOMMENDED TEXTBOOKS**

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### **Required Reading:**

- Job, Rueben P. and Norman Shawchuck., *A Guide to Prayer for Ministers and Other Servants*. Nashville, TN: The Upper Room. 1983.
- Marsh, Karen, Wright. *Vintage Saints and Sinners. 25 Christians Who Transformed My Faith*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press. 2017.
- Willimon, William H., *Pastor: Revised Edition: The Theology and Practice of Ordained Ministry*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press. 2016.
- Scazzero, Peter., *The Emotionally Healthy Leader: How transforming your inner life will deeply transform your church, team, and the world*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. 2015.

### **Recommended Reading:**

- Henson, E. Glenn., *Spiritual Preparation for Christian Leadership*. Nashville, TN: The Upper Room. 1999.
- Peterson, Eugene. *The Pastor: A Memoir*. New York, New York: Harper Collins Book. 2011.
- Hirsch, Alan., *5Q: Reactivating the Original Intelligence and Capacity of the Body of Christ*. Cody, WY: 100 Movement Publishment. 2017.

## **COURSE FORMAT & PROCEDURES**

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The course will be taught in fifteen weekly sessions of about three hours. The class will follow a hybrid format with students attending in-person and online. During each weekly session, the class will review and discuss the assigned textbook and Bible readings. This will be done through a

combination of lecture, multimedia presentation and conversational dialogue. Group discussion will be an important aspect of the learning within class time. There will be opportunities to share personal views and interpretations of Old Testament and New Testament books or passages based on what students are learning together.

For students attending the class online, you will be expected to have your camera turned on the entire session to facilitate face-to-face interactions and simulate an in-person learning environment. This will make for a better learning experience too.

Regular class attendance is important. [Leland's policy](#) is that a student may not have more than three unexcused absences from a semester class. Excused absences include illness, injury, military service, and certain travel. Missing 25% of classes may result in not passing the class.

To the extent possible, a student is to notify the instructor as soon as possible (but no later than 12 noon on the day the class is scheduled to meet) if he or she is unable to attend a class or expects to miss an assignment deadline. Also, as a courtesy, let the instructor know via email or text message if you are going to be more than 15 minutes late to class.

Leland email accounts will be used as the primary means of communication throughout the semester. Please be sure to check your Leland email on a regular basis to stay up-to-date and to submit your papers to the professor.

In the event that Leland cancels in-person meetings for whatever reason, the class will meet online. If the instructor needs to cancel class, an email will be sent to students no later than 12 noon on the day the class is scheduled to meet.

For all coursework and class discussions, the students and instructor will adhere to a policy of academic honesty and integrity. Ideas, interpretations and opinions of others will be properly cited and attributed to their source. Everyone's opinions will be listened to and considered in a collegial way. We are seeking to learn together. Therefore, we will value each other's opinions and insights as being necessary to gain a better understanding of a priest, pastor, minister or believer's formation. Our attitudes, behavior and conduct will reflect this in all our interactions.

## **COURSE ASSIGNMENTS, GRADING AND EVALUATION**

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This course consists of 5 major assignments:

- Class Participation and Leading Weekly Meditations (15% of total grade)
- Weekly Reflection Questions and Journaling (20% of total grade)
- Introduce Us to Your Saint (or Sinner) (20% of total grade)
- The "To Will One Thing" Reflection Project with the A(postle) P(rophe) E(vangelist) S(hepherd) T(eacher) Assessment (15% of total grade)
- Formation for Ministry (Spiritual Autobiography) Papers (30% of total grade)

This course will follow the Scholastic Grading Policy as defined in the [John Leland Center for Theological Studies Catalog](#).

The student's final grade will be weighted in the following manner:

- **Class Participation and Leading Weekly Meditations (15% of total grade)**  
**Procedure:** Students will be evaluated on their class participation in discussions and their level of engagement with the subject matter. Complete and engage in discussion on the assigned readings and class projects.

Each student will claim course sessions to lead devotions on at least two occasions. They may use any devotional plan of your choice, but Job and Shawchuck's *A Guide to Prayer for Ministers and Other Servants* is preferred.

- **Weekly Reflection Questions and Journaling (20% of total grade)**  
**Procedure:** Students will create a weekly journal entry that may focus on the assigned readings as well as life experiences or clarification of calling or simply words of prayer. Students are especially encouraged to use Rueben Job and Norman Shawchuck's *A Guide to Prayer for Ministers and Other Servants* or Eugene Peterson's *The Pastor* as a guide for this project. Date all entries. The **first entry** should include a description of your devotional life. What does it entail? Devotion length? What influences have shaped your current devotional life (i.e. people, places, resources)? Challenges and benefits? Has it ever changed? When? Why?

Students are encouraged to be creative with their journals. Write in the format of prose or poetry. Paint or color or collage to create visual journal entries from time to time. This is your space. Occasionally, students may be asked to share these in class.

There are two options for the journal. You may complete your writings in a journal or the electronic document provided to you.

Students will submit a complete journal at the end of the semester. Handwritten journals must be postmarked and sent to Pro. McNeill at Leland by Wednesday, Nov. 29<sup>th</sup>. Electronic versions must be submitted for review by Wednesday, Nov. 29<sup>th</sup>.

- **Introduce Us to Your Saint (or Sinner) (20% of total grade)**  
**Procedure:** Modeled after those folks we will meet throughout the semester in Karen Wright Marsh's *Vintage Saints and Sinners*, present a 10-minute introduction to the class of someone that has been influential in your faith journey. Submit a 2 to 4 page paper (minimum of 500 words) on this person. Again, your peers will have 5 minutes to ask questions. This person does not need to be from the text, but you must the name for Pro. McNeill's approval.

Here are a few general guidelines:

- a. The paper must be a minimum of 500 words, double-spaced, font size 12, Times New Roman.
- b. Turabian style source citation is preferred and a bibliography is required.

- c. Only credible sources are acceptable for a paper such as this (not Internet sites like Wikipedia or the like). Credible sources are those following academic standards of peer reviews and editorial oversight.
- d. Use at least one other source for your presentation.

**Grading:** Showing evidence of research that seeks to satisfy curiosity about the text is important. An additional grading criterion will be the ability to pull together the information and communicate it in such a way that it clarifies the biblical text for interpretation. Points will be taken off for poor grammar, misspellings, wrong punctuation and lack of proofreading.

Late submissions of papers and/or presentations need to be discussed with the instructor ahead of time. It is expected that papers will be turned in and presentations given on time. But things happen in life that can make this impossible. Therefore, reasonable due date extensions will be given when needed. However, don't wait until the last minute to make a request. Note: Students may not use AI (Artificial Intelligence) tools for any assignments in this class. See Leland's Code of Ethics for more details.

- **The "To Will One Thing" Reflection Project with the A(postle) P(rophet) E(vangelist) S(hepherd) T(eacher) Assessment (15% of total grade)**

**Procedure:** Students will complete a Personal Vocation Assessment on-line at 5Qcentral.com. 5Q refers to a 5-fold ministry quotient with roots in Eph.4: 1-16. Using these assessment results, students will determine how their gifting can be utilized or leveraged as a conduit for ministry.

In summary, Soren Kierkegaard's book, *Purity of Heart is to Will One Thing*, suggests that a divided mind does not have peace. Employ your APEST assessment results to write a 2 to 4 page paper (minimum of 500 words) that evaluates a major issue. Keep the following prompts in mind:

- a. Name a primary issue facing you or God's church right now.
- b. Share how you've seen the issue appear in your life or the culture.
- c. How does Scripture tell us to approach or address it?
- d. Evaluate your progress or the church's progress with it.
- e. Explore how your primary and or secondary gifts inform how you see and approach the selected issue.

Here are a few general guidelines:

- a. The paper must be a minimum of 500 words, double-spaced, font size 12, Times New Roman.
- b. Turabian style source citation is preferred and a bibliography is required.
- c. Only credible sources are acceptable for a paper such as this (not Internet sites like Wikipedia or the like). Credible sources are those following academic standards of peer reviews and editorial oversight. Every chapter in the textbook ends with resources for further reading.
- d. Use at least one other resource for your presentation.

**Grading:** Showing evidence of research that seeks to satisfy curiosity about the text is important. An additional grading criterion will be the ability to pull together the information and communicate it in such a way that it clarifies the biblical text for interpretation. Points will be taken off for poor grammar, misspellings, wrong punctuation and lack of proofreading.

Late submissions of papers need to be discussed with the instructor ahead of time. It is expected that papers will be turned in on time. But things happen in life that can make this impossible. Therefore, reasonable due date extensions will be given when needed. However, don't wait until the last minute to make a request. Note: Students may not use AI (Artificial Intelligence) tools for any assignments in this class. See Leland's Code of Ethics for more details.

- **Formation for Ministry (Spiritual Autobiography) Papers (30% of total grade)**  
Write a 7 to 10 page paper (minimum of 1750 words) articulating and reflecting upon your life's calling. The paper should include the following:
  - a. Your sense of calling for vocational or other ministry
  - b. Your view on ordination and its significance
  - c. Your spiritual gifts and their usefulness in ministry
  - d. The passions you have for particular aspects of ministry
  - e. Those areas of ministry you want to further develop
  - f. Aspects of your character that aid your role as minister
  - g. Spiritual disciplines that you want to develop and the impact you hope it makes on your roles as a minister

Here are a few general guidelines:

- a. The paper must be a minimum of 1750 words, double-spaced, font size 12, Times New Roman.
- b. Turabian style source citation is preferred and a bibliography is required.
- c. Only credible sources are acceptable for a paper such as this (not Internet sites like Wikipedia or the like). Credible sources are those following academic standards of peer reviews and editorial oversight. Every chapter in the textbook ends with resources for further reading.
- d. Rely upon at least one other resource for your presentation.

**Grading:** Showing evidence of research that seeks to satisfy curiosity about the text is important. An additional grading criterion will be the ability to pull together the information and communicate it in such a way that it clarifies the biblical text for interpretation. Points will be taken off for poor grammar, misspellings, wrong punctuation and lack of proofreading.

Late submissions of papers need to be discussed with the instructor ahead of time. It is expected that papers will be turned in on time. But things happen in life that can make this impossible. Therefore, reasonable due date extensions will be given when needed. However, don't wait until the last minute to make a request. Note: Students may not use

AI (Artificial Intelligence) tools for any assignments in this class. See Leland’s Code of Ethics for more details.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

The class meets weekly 15 times over a period of 16 weeks. The expectation is that you will read the textbook chapters and other assigned readings before class begins to contribute meaningfully to the discussion. The required textbook readings and related topics will be taught as follows.

<b><i>Week</i></b>	<b><i>Date</i></b>	<b><i>Discussion Topic</i></b>	<b><i>Required Reading</i></b>	<b><i>Assignments</i></b>
#	Date Class Meets or Assignments Post		What Should Be Read Prior to Class Session	What is Due and Due Date
1	Aug. 29	Course overview, Introductions & Soren Kierkegaard in <i>Vintage Saints and Sinners</i> <b>A Guide to Prayer...: True Greatness</b>		
2	Sept. 5	<b>Pastor:</b> Intro. & Ch. 1 – Ordination: Why Pastors <b>Vintage Saints and Sinners:</b> Augustine <b>The Emotionally Healthy Leader:</b> My Journey through Emotionally Unhealthy Leadership	Willimon, pp. 27-54  Marsh, pp. 18-23  Scazzero, pp. 11- 24	Complete the APEST Assessment In your journal, share your initial reaction. What was affirmed? What surprised you? What did you learn or notice?
3	Sept. 12	<b>Pastor:</b> Ch. 2 Ministry for the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century <b>Vintage Saints and Sinners</b> – Therese of Lisieux <b>The Emotionally Healthy Leader</b> – The Emotionally Unhealthy Leader	Willimon, pp. 55-74  Marsh, pp. 24-30  Scazzero, pp. 25 - 50	Reflect and journal on this weeks readings. Answer survey on page 34 and 35.

4	Sept. 19	<b>Pastor:</b> Ch. 3 The Pastor as Priest <b>Vintage Saints and Sinners</b> – C. S. Lewis <b>The Emotionally Healthy Leader</b> – Face Your Shadow	Willimon, pp. 75-90  Marsh, pp. 31-36  Scazzero, pp. 51 - 65	Reflect and journal on this weeks readings. Answer survey questions on page 58-59.
5	Sept. 26	<b>Pastor:</b> Ch.4 The Priest as Pastor <b>Vintage Saints and Sinners</b> – Henri Nouwen <b>The Emotionally Healthy Leader</b> – Face Your Shadow	Willimon, pp. 91 - 108  Marsh, pp. 37-41  Scazzero, pp. 65 - 80	“Introduce a Saint” Project (Group 1-2)  Reflect and journal on this weeks readings. Answer questions 71 and/or 6 questions on pages 74-75.
6	Oct. 3	<b>Pastor:</b> Ch. 5 The Pastor as Interpreter of Scripture & The Wonderful Thickness... <b>Vintage Saints and Sinners</b> – Dietrich Bonhoeffer <b>The Emotionally Healthy Leader</b> – Lead Out of Marriage or Your Singleness	Willimon, pp. 109 - 136  Marsh, pp. 62 - 67  Scazzero, pp. 80 – 89	“Introduce a Saint” Project (Group 2-2)  Reflect and journal on this weeks readings. Answer survey on page 88 and 89.
7	Oct. 10 (No Class)	Reading Week		
8	Oct. 17	<b>Pastor:</b> Ch. 6 The Pastor as Preacher & Preaching in Acts <b>Vintage Saints and Sinners</b> – A.W. Tozer	Willimon, pp. 137 - 166  Marsh, pp. 68 -74	“Introduce a Saint” Project (Group 3-3)



		<b>The Emotionally Healthy Leader</b> – Lead Out of Marriage or Your Singleness	Scazzero, pp. 90 -114	Reflect and journal on this weeks readings.
9	Oct. 24	<b>Pastor:</b> Ch. 7 The Pastor as Counselor & Augustine’s Confessions... <b>Vintage Saints and Sinners</b> – Brother Lawrence <b>The Emotionally Healthy Leader</b> – Slow Down for Loving Union	Willimon, pp. 137 - 196  Marsh, pp. 81 - 88  Scazzero, pp. 115 – 133	Reflect and journal on this weeks readings. Answer survey on page 121 and 122.
10	Oct. 24	<b>Pastor:</b> Ch. 8 The Pastor as Teacher <b>Vintage Saints and Sinners</b> – Thomas Merton <b>The Emotionally Healthy Leader</b> – Slow Down for Loving Union	Willimon, pp. 197 - 214  Marsh, pp. 89 -95  Scazzero, pp. 133 – 142	Reflect and journal on this weeks readings. Begin to craft a “Rule of Life”. Respond to the three questions on page 38. Email Prof. McNeill your responses before class.
11	Oct. 31	<b>Pastor:</b> Ch. 9 The Pastor as Evangelist & Evangelism... <b>Vintage Saints and Sinners</b> – Fannie Lou Hamer <b>The Emotionally Healthy Leader</b> – Practice Sabbath Delight	Willimon, pp. 215 - 238  Marsh, pp. 104 -110  Scazzero, pp. 143- 160	Reflect and journal on this weeks readings. Answer survey

				on page 149 and 150.
12	Nov. 7	<p><b>Pastor:</b> Ch. 10 The Pastor as Prophet &amp; Sin...</p> <p><b>Vintage Saints and Sinners</b> – John Wesley</p> <p><b>The Emotionally Healthy Leader</b> – Practice Sabbath Delight</p>	<p>Willimon, pp. 239 - 262</p> <p>Marsh, pp. 111 -116</p> <p>Scazzero, pp. 160- 172</p>	<p>“To Will One Thing” Project Due</p> <p>Reflect and journal on this weeks readings. Answer questions on page 171.</p>
13	Nov. 14	<p><b>Pastor:</b> Ch. 11 The Pastor as Lead Missionary</p> <p><b>Vintage Saints and Sinners</b> – Dorothy Day</p> <p><b>The Emotionally Healthy Leader</b> – Culture and Team Building</p>	<p>Willimon, pp. 263 - 280</p> <p>Marsh, pp. 124 -130</p> <p>Scazzero, pp. 211- 237</p>	<p>Reflect and journal on this weeks readings. Answer survey on page 214 and 215 and Four Questions on pages 235 -236.</p>
14	Nov. 21 Thanksgiving Break	<p><b>Pastor:</b> Ch. 12 The Pastor as Leader &amp; Failure in Ministry</p> <p><b>Vintage Saints and Sinners</b> – Howard Thurman</p> <p><b>The Emotionally Healthy Leader</b> – Power and Wise Boundaries</p>	<p>Willimon, pp. 281 - 302</p> <p>Marsh, pp. 131- 138</p> <p>Scazzero, pp. 239- 268</p>	<p>Reflect and journal on this weeks readings. Answer survey on page 273 and 274 and Four Questions on pages 266 -268.</p>

15	Nov. 28	<b>Pastor:</b> Ch. 13 The Pastor as Character <b>Vintage Saints and Sinners</b> – Julian of Norwich <b>The Emotionally Healthy Leader</b> – Endings and New Beginnings	Willimon, pp. 303 - 318  Marsh, pp. 139 -145  Scazzero, pp. 269- 297	Reflect and journal on this weeks readings. Answer survey on page 273 and 274.
16	Dec. 5	<b>Pastor:</b> Ch. 14 The Pastor as Disciplined Christian <b>Vintage Saints and Sinners</b> – Juana Ines De La Cruz <b>The Emotionally Healthy Leader</b> – Endings and New Beginnings	Willimon, pp. 319 - 340  Marsh, pp. 169 -176  Scazzero, pp. 298- 300	<b>Formation for Ministry (Spiritual Autobiography) Papers Due</b>  Ask the Four Questions on page 298-300 in class.

**IX. Attendance Policy**

Refer to the Leland Student Handbook for the grading policy.

**X. Grading Policy**

Refer to the Leland Student Handbook for the grading policy.

**XI. Classroom Policy**

*Academic Honesty:*

Living a life of honesty and integrity is an essential part of being a Christian. In an academic institution that means we strive to maintain high standards of conduct both inside and outside the classroom. It is expected that you will refrain from actions like the following:

1. Plagiarism: presenting someone else’s work, either orally or in writing, as your own
2. Dishonesty in exams or on assignments: including copying from someone or providing answers to another student.
3. Inappropriate collaboration: While you may work together on assignments, all work submitted must be your own in your own words.